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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses moral development and illustrates ways that it can be fostered in children both in the home and in the classroom. Moral education is discussed in terms of four basic questions: (1) Is there a need for it? (2) If so, is it the job of the schools to teach morality? (3) What is moral development? and (4) If fostering moral development in the schools is considered necessary and legitimate, how does one go about it in a way that is educationally effective and ethically defensible in a pluralistic society? Suggestions for fostering moral development in the school include using materials that promote discussion of moral decisions; planning projects that naturally stimulate children to work together (cooking, crafts, etc.); fostering a sense of community among children in the classroom by setting aside time for children to meet as a class and share what they have worked on, discuss an experience they have had together or exchange views on how to solve a problem that has arisen; intervening directly at times to help children develop more cooperative behaviors; and respecting children's rights and dignity as persons. (MS)

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THE CHALLENGE OF WATERGATE TO AMERICAN SCHOOLS: FOSTERING THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN[1]

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I had a psychology professor in graduate school who used to say that most education provides answers to questions that people don't have. I don't think that indictment holds for this morning's session, because you're not a captive audience and you presumably wouldn't be here if you didn't have questions about morality and education. Nevertheless, I'd like to begin by identifying what I think are four basic questions to ask when approaching the issue of moral education in the schools.

The first question is simply, Is there a need? Is there anything to worry about, any reason why we should be concerned about moral development in society? The second question is, Should teachers intervene? Even if there is a real need, is it the job of the schools to teach morality? Question number 3 is, What is "moral development"? Can you do anything about the problem or decide whether to get involved without first knowing what constitutes progress toward moral maturity? Finally, question 4: If you think that fostering moral development in the schools is necessary and legitimate, how do you go about it? How can you do it in a way that is educationally effective and ethically defensible in a pluralistic society?

Is There a Need?

Let's consider the first question: Is there a need? Someone asked Urie Bronfenbrenner yesterday, after his speech on his visit to China, whether he saw any social progress in this country. He replied that the times are still very difficult and it's easy to get discouraged, but that he finds there is a major difference now in the response he gets when he talks to different groups in the community. He said it used to be that when he went on about the problems of the society and how it's going to hell in a hand-basket, people would say, "I don't understand what you're saying, what's the problem, everything seems O.K. to me." He said now almost nobody says that; almost everybody agrees there's a problem, though people still differ greatly about how to solve it.

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1. Adapted from a speech at the third Annual Conference on Open Education, State University of New York at Cortland, October, 1974.

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What are the dimensions of the problem? First of all, there's the issue of social injustice. We've had reports that 10 million American children are undernourished, some severely so. The estimates differ by a million or so, but we know that many millons of American children are hungry and do not get enough food to keep them healthy. We know that 2 out of 3 poor children in the country have not seen a dentist. If you're sitting in school with a rotting tooth, there's not much you're going to learn. We know that more than 40% of poor children who have disabling handicaps get no medical treatment. We know that infant mortality among black children in the ghettos of Detroit is as high as it is among children in the poorest sections of India. We know that the federal government for many years paid Senator James Eastland $150,000 a year not to grow crops on his Mississippi plantation while the sharecroppers who were thereby deprived of work got welfare support of $35.00 a month for a family of four. We know that the problem of social injustice has global proportions. Rich nations consume most of the world's resources. More than half of humanity remains illiterate and hungry across the globe.

Crime continues to rise. It is increasing not only vertically but horizontally as well. Not long ago there was a rash of robberies in the schools of New York City, where armed men came into the classrooms of small children, 1st-graders, held up the teacher, and threatened to shoot the children or the teacher if she didn't turn over her jewels and purse. It used to be that thugs and villains were ashamed to do their dastardly deeds before little children; no longer.

We know that child abuse has reached drastic proportions in this country. Bronfenbrenner, when he spoke here two years ago, reported a study by Professor Gil at Brandeis that surveyed all kinds of child abuse--beatings, poisonings, locking kids up in the closet for days, holding their fingers over a flame on a gas stove, cutting them with knives--all wounds deliberately inflicted. The number of cases in a single year was estimated to be between 2½ million and 4 million.

Those are some of the dimensions of the problem. You could also point to the loss of integrity in the society, the unwillingness or inability of persons to act on moral principles. To illustrate that point, I'd like to read you two sets of statements. Try to identify as you listen the source of each set. Here's the first:

> I carried out my orders.
>
> Where would we have been if everyone had thought things out in those days?
>
> With us an order was an order.
>
> The success of this man proved to me that I should subordinate myself to him.

Now the second set:

> I was there to follow orders, not to think.

I believed he had the authority to do it.

I was not the one to stand up at a meeting and say that this should be stopped, in all honesty because of fear of group pressure that would ensue, of not being a team player.

You have no idea of my loyalty to this man.

Would anyone like to hazard a guess as to the source of these two sets of statements?--Could the first ones be from members of the Green Berets? That's a good guess. Is the second group from the proceedings of the Watergate hearings? That's correct. How about the first set? That's right--the first statements came from Adolph Eichman at his trial for the crimes he committed in Nazi Germany. It's pretty hard, isn't it, to distinguish the two sets.

During the Watergate hearings, William Sloan Coffin wrote a column in the New York Times about Jeb Magruder. Coffin knew Jeb as a friend when both were at Williams College in the 1950's, and even had him as a student in his ethics class. During that time at Williams, Coffin says, he worried about Jeb Magruder. He used to say to him, "You're a nice guy, Jeb, you have lots of charm but little inner strength, and if you don't come to stand for something you're apt to fall for anything." Coffin concludes his column by pointing out that to do evil deeds you don't have to be an evil person, only a nice guy who is net yet a good man. Adolf Eichman was probably kind to his children.

So, we know that the people in government haven't stood up very well, but what about the man in the street? Stanley Milgram studied the moral behavior of the man in the street in an experiment that you may be familiar with. He ran an ad in the New Haven newspaper that said he would pay $5 to anyone who would volunteer for an experiment on learning. He got volunteers from all walks of life and from all age levels. When they reported to the laboratory, they pulled straws from a hat, ostensibly to determine their role in the experiment. It was in fact rigged so that the people coming in off the streets would get to be the "teachers" and somebody from Milgram's laboratory staff would get to be the "learner."

The learner was then taken into the next room and strapped into a chair and electrodes attached to his wrists. The experimenter told the teacher, the naive subject, that the learner was to try to memorize paired associates, two words that went together, like "blue" and "girl." If the learner made a mistake, the teacher, seated in a different room, was to give him an electrical shock. On a panel before the teacher, the shock levels ranged from 15 to 450 volts in steps of 15 volts. The voltage levels were also labeled: from "slight shock" to "strong shock" up to "severe shock" and finally "XXX." The learner, whose responses were in fact pretaped, first complained about his discomfort, then screamed with pain, then pleaded to be released, then protested that he had a heart condition and couldn't stand it any longer, and finally fell silent.

How did the teachers respond? In most cases, they showed real conflict about obeying the experimenter's instructions. Milgram reports that subjects were observed to sweat, tremble, stutter, bite their lips, and dig their fingernails into their flesh. Three had convulsive fits of laughter.

Milgram asked psychiatrists and psychologists to predict what percentage of people would obey to the end and give 450 volts of shock. The experts predicted that fewer than 2% would give the highest intensity of shock, and that the 2% who would go all the way would be crazy or somehow disturbed. Does anyone know in fact what percentage of people obeyed to the last? Seventy per cent of Milgram's subjects gave the full 450 volts. That sobering outcome supports Jonathan Kozol's assertion that the problem with the schools is not that they aren't working, but that they are working all too well. They are producing moral conformists who will submit to authority, even commands to inflict harsh physical pain on innocent victims.

Okay, you might say, people can't stand up under pressure, they have weak spines and they buckle when the going gets tough, but what about the compassion of the average person? Wouldn't he help somebody out when the person was in need? Recall the long depressing catalogue of newspaper reports on just this question. Let me read you a few.

> Kitty Genovese is set upon by a maniac as she returns home from work at 3:00 a.m. Thirty-eight of her neighbors in Kew Gardens come to their windows when she cries out in terror; none comes to her assistance even though her stalker takes over half an hour to murder her. No one even so much as calls the police. She dies.
>
> Andrew Mormille is stabbed in the stomach as he rides the A train home to Manhattan. Eleven other riders watch the 17-year-old boy as he bleeds to death; none come to his assistance even though his attackers have left the car. He dies.
>
> An 18-year-old switchboard operator, alone in her office in the Bronx, is raped and beaten. Escaping momentarily, she runs naked and bleeding to the street, screaming for help. A crowd of 40 passersby gathers and watches as, in broad daylight, the rapist tries to drag her back upstairs; no one interferes.
>
> Eleanor Bradley trips and breaks her leg while shopping on Fifth Avenue. Dazed and shocked, she calls for help, but the hurrying stream of executives and shoppers simply parts and flows past.

> Carmen Colon, age 10, is kidnapped by a rapist-killer while on a shopping errand for her mother. She temporarily escapes from her assailant along a busy expressway near Rochester, New York. Half-clad and obviously distraught, she appeals for help to more than a hundred motorists, all of whom pass her by. She is murdered.

That's some indication of how the man in the street has behaved in the face of a fellow human being in need of help. What about people who supposedly make a profession out of being Good Samaritans? How do they perform when confronted with a similar situation? To find out, two psychologists asked Princeton seminarians to write a sermon on the Good Samaritan parable which they were to deliver to an audience of faculty and peers. While walking across campus to the lecture hall, each seminarian came across a person slumped in an alleyway. This person, in reality an actor, coughed and groaned in distress. What did the seminarians do? Twenty-four of the 40 simply passed by. The experimenters noted: "Seminary students going to give their talk on the parable of the Good Samaritan literally stepped over the victim as they hurried on their way."

Should the Schools Get Involved?

We can agree, then, that there's a problem. But where do we go from there? Does it mean that schools should get into the act? Should you as teachers get involved?

I'd like to answer that question by pointing out that you are already involved. Day in and day out, you act as moral educators with your children. You continually evaluate their behavior; you monitor their social relations in the classroom, and you do this as part of a larger social context called the school that also has rules and makes evaluations of behavior. Lawrence Kohlberg tells a story about his 2nd-grade son. One day he came home from school and said, "Dad, I don't want to be one of the bad boys in school." Kohlberg asked him, "Well, who are the bad boys?" His son said, "The bad boys are the ones who don't put their books back where they belong." Kohlberg comments that the teacher probably would have been surprised to know that relatively minor classroom management concerns defined for her children what she and the school thought were basic moral values.

We could all cite many more examples of the moral lessons that schools teach children. Most children go to schools where they must compete with their fellow student, where they rarely if ever engage in learning that requires cooperation, where helping another individual is usually defined as cheating. Most kids go to schools where the rules are laid down by authority, where the students never have a chance to participate in making, revising, or enforcing rules, where they are expected to obey the adults in charge without question. And then when they graduate from school, they are expected to think for themselves.

What is Moral Development?

Let's assume, then, that there is no way to avoid moral education in the schools. It's part of the hidden curriculum. But should teachers go at it directly, full steam ahead? That brings us to the next question: What is moral maturity or moral development? If you're going to educate for moral development, then obviously you need some idea of what moral development is.

To illustrate one way of defining moral development, I'm going to give you a moral dilemma that Lawrence Kohlberg has made well-known through his research in this area. A moral dilemma is a hard question; you can debate it, there's no culturally conditioned response to it, and that is why it's a good way to find out how someone really thinks.

> In Europe a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. Doctors told her husband, Heinz, that there was one drug that might save her. It was a form of radium that the town druggist had recently discovered. But he was charging $2,000 for a small dose of radium. Heinz, despite his best efforts, could raise only $1,000. He pleaded with the druggist to sell it to him cheaper and let him pay the rest later, but the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So in desperation Heinz broke into the store and stole the drug.

In 1958 Kohlberg presented these and other moral dilemmas to 75 boys ranging in age from 10-16. In interviewing these subjects over the next 16 years, he found that there were sequential stages in the way they analyzed moral issues, a changing pattern in the way they reasoned, for example, about what Heinz should or shouldn't have done.

The six stages which Kohlberg identified are indicated in the staircase diagram (Figure 1). I'd like you, taking the Heinz dilemma, to try to construct examples of the different stages, especially of the first three stages. Most children, under the right environmental conditions, can develop at least some Stage 3 reasoning by the time they are in 6th grade; you can take that as a developmental goal for moral education in the elementary school.

At Stage 1, might makes right. In the child's view, the people in power--parents, teachers and other adult authorities--determine what's right and what's wrong. The moral motive at Stage 1 is to stay out of trouble, either by doing what you're told or by making sure you don't get caught when you do step out of line. What would be an example of a Stage 1 reason why Heinz should not steal the drug? He might get caught and have to go to jail. Now turn it around: what's a Stage 1 reason <u>for</u> stealing the drug? He might get in trouble if he doesn't steal it; his wife's brother might find out

Figure 1: KOHLBERG'S DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF MORAL REASONING

POSTCONVENTIONAL STAGES

(Concern for fidelity to self-chosen moral principles)

Stages 5 and 6

Motivator: Internal commitment to principles of "conscience": respect for the rights, life, and dignity of all persons.
Awareness: Moral/social rules are social contracts, arrived at through reconciliation of differing viewpoints, open to change.
Assumption: Moral principles are "right" regardless of external consequences; law derives from morality, not vice versa.

CONVENTIONAL STAGES

(Concern for meeting external social expectations)

Stage 4

Motivator: Sense of duty or obligation to live up to socially defined role and maintain existing social order.
Awareness: There is a larger social "system" that regulates the behavior of individuals within it.
Assumption: Authority or the social order is the source of morality.

Stage 3

Motivator: Desire for social approval by living up to good boy/good girl stereotype, meeting expectations of others.
Awareness: Need to consider intentions and feelings of others cooperation means ideal reciprocity (GOLDEN RULE).
Assumption: Good behavior = social conformity.

PRECONVENTIONAL STAGES

(Concern for external concrete consequences to self)

Stage 2

Motivator: Self-interest, what's-in-it-for-me; do "what's natural."
Awareness: Human relations are governed by concrete reciprocity: let's make a deal, "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours."
Assumption: Have to look out for self; you're obligated only to those who help you; each person has own needs and viewpoint.

Stage 1

Motivator: Fear of getting caught, desire to avoid punishment by authority.
Awareness: There are rules and consequences of breaking them.
Assumption: Might makes right; what's rewarded by those in power is "good," what's punished is "bad."

(Figure by T. Lickona)

that Heinz let her die and come and beat him up. Do you see the distinction between the content of the answer and the reasoning behind it? Content can vary while the reasoning remains the same.

What is a Stage 2 reason for stealing the drug? He loves his wife. I'd have to ask you what you mean by love; why is that a good reason for Heinz to try to save his wife's life? Because she cooks and cleans for him--that's a Stage 2 reason and is in fact what some juvenile delinquents have said when given this dilemma. Stage 2, with its focus on self-interest, might seem like a regression to you. But it's really a step forward because at Stage 2 children are beginning to realize that morality doesn't come in cans; it has something to do with human needs. When that awareness begins to emerge, it's natural for the child to think first about his own needs. Even at Stage 2, though, there is a limited kind of altruism, a concrete reciprocity--you do something for me and I'll do something for you. If Heinz saves his wife now, maybe she'll help him out if he's ever in a similar boat, or maybe he's obligated to steal the drug for her because of all that she's done for him in the past.

Kohlberg calls Stages 1 and 2 "preconventional" moral reasoning because morality is not yet governed by conventional norms or social expectations; rather it is governed primarily by what the individual thinks will be the concrete consequences for himself.

Stage 3 is a big leap forward. It takes the individual from concern about his or her own needs to a much broader concern about the needs and expectations of other people. The Stage 3 person wants to be nice, to please others. Kohlberg calls this orientation "Charlie Brown" morality to indicate both its virtues and its limitations.

Can you give me a Stage 3 reason why Heinz should steal the drug? His friends would criticize him if he didn't. What would people think of him if he let his wife die? When you reach a Stage 3 concern about the welfare of others, you also develop a concern for their opinion of you--you value their esteem. What if Heinz's wife hadn't been so good to him? Stage 2 might say, well, then don't help her. Stage 3, however, would say she needs the help, never mind what's gone before, put yourself in her shoes. The golden rule. To find out whether your children understand this Stage 3 principle, ask them sometime what the golden rule tells you to do if someone just comes up on the street and punches you in the arm. Most 10-year-olds, still predominately Stage 2, will say, "Hit him back. Do unto others as they do unto you." An unusually mature 10-year-old said to Piaget, "You shouldn't hit back. There's no end to revenge." That's Stage 3.

I've given you just a bare-bones description of the stages. People go to Harvard for a year to study how to identify someone's stage of moral reasoning, and Kohlberg and his associates are continually redefining the stages on the basis of their ongoing research and new developments in the theory. To put a little more meat on the skeleton, let me share with you a story or two about my own son, Mark, who will

be 7 years old tomorrow. We were walking across campus one day about 6 months ago, and I mentione that I was going to give a talk that afternoon to a group of men, the Cortland Rotary, about how children grow up to know the what's right and what's wrong. He said, "Well, I have something to say about that." "Okay," I said, "what do you think is right for children to do?"

Mark replied, "Children should be good to their parents, and parents should be good to their children--that's the way they get along."

"That's very interesting," I said, "tell me, why do you think children shouldn't disobey their parents?"

"Well," Mark said, "if they disobey their parents, then parents won't do nice things for them."

So I said, "Suppose one day Mom and I weren't very nice to you--you asked if you could have a new Richie Rich comic book, and we just said no without any good reason. Then later in the day, because we were going to have company, we asked you to do us a favor, like vacuuming the rug. Do you think you should do it for us?"

Mark said without hesitation, "Well, no,--because you weren't nice to me. Sorry, Dad, but that's just the way it works, you see." A solid Stage 2.

Let me relate another conversation which illustrates that children, like most adults, are in different developmental stages at the same time. I asked Mark the question about what you should do if someone comes up and punches you in the arm. He said, "Well, I can tell you a right answer and a wrong answer. The right answer is you should ask him please not to punch you again."

"What's the wrong answer?" I asked.

"You should hit him back."

Probing further, I asked, "Why do you think hitting back is wrong?"

"It's really right and wrong," Mark said. "It's right because then he will know how it feels, and it's wrong because you could get in trouble with your parents."

I'll leave it to you to sort out the different stages of thinking that are represented there.

This morning I decided to do a little longitudinal research. I wondered how Mark would respond, a half a year later, to the moral question of what to do when his parents ask him to vacuum the rug after they have unreasonably refused a request for a new comic book. I began by asking what it means to be good. He said, "Being good means being kind to others"--ah, I thought, the dawn of Stage 3. Then he

added "...when they're kind to you." I then raised the dilemma about whether to vacuum the rug. He paused for a while, then said, "I think I should vacuum the rug. It would be a good way of earning the new comic book."

That's turning the situation into a Stage 2 deal, of course, so I said, "No, we wouldn't pay you any allowance, this is a favor we're asking."

After pausing again, he said, "Well, I'd still do it."

"Even though," I reminded, "we weren't nice to you and wouldn't get you the comic when you asked?"

"I would still do it," he said, "I just like doing favors for people."

"Why do you like doing favors for people?" I asked.

"Because then they don't have to do all the work themselves."

"Why is that important?"

"Well," Mark said, "if they can do only part of the job, how can they get it done if they don't have help?"

That seems to me to be the beginning of a Stage 3 concern for the needs of the other person, apart from what's in it for you. I hasten to testify as a parent that crossing the bridge from reasoning to consistent behavioral practice is a big developmental step in itself, which by no means automatically follows the achievement of the reasoning. Mark at age 7 may be capable of some Stage 3 reasoning, but his behavior is often not even at the level of Stage 2 reciprocity. Closing the gap between reasoning and action becomes a major issue when you consider applying Kohlberg's theory to practical life situations like the classroom, where behavior really matters.

What lies beyond Stage 3? At Stage 4, concern for others is expanded to a wider scale. You begin to have a concept of society and your role within a larger social system; you want to do your duty, to set a good example, to insist that other people do, too. This is still a morality shaped by external expectations, however. Not until Stages 5 and 6 can you stand outside the social framework and say that some things are morally wrong in the system; some laws or institutions need changing in order to better respect the rights of individuals. You may even believe at Stage 6, as Martin Luther King did, that justice requires you to disobey a law like segregation that degrades human personality, in order to arouse the conscience of the community. At Stages 5 and 6--which Kohlberg calls the postconventional level--universal moral principles define right and wrong. That's what we told the Nazis at the end of World War II: that they had an obligation to universal moral laws respecting human life and dignity, not simply to the laws of the German state.

What Does the Research Show?

What does the research show regarding Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning? It appears to indicate, first of all, that the stages are universal--although there are those who think that all the evidence isn't in. Kohlberg claims that his cross-cultural research in countries like Taiwan, England, Turkey, Mexico, and the United States reveals that what people value may be relative to culture, but how they reason about what they value goes through the same sequence of stages everywhere.

The research does show clearly that some people move faster through the stage sequence and some go farther. According to Kohlberg's studies, only 25% of adults in Western societies reach postconventional reasoning (Stages 5 and 6).

Is moral stage development affected by social class? The evidence is that children from middle or upper socioeconomic environments advance through the stages more quickly than their peers at lower socioeconomic levels.

Does the moral stage relate to moral behavior? Kohlberg is careful to point out that the same moral behavior--e.g., doing someone a favor--can spring from different stages of moral reasoning. Despite that complicating factor, it has often been possible to predict moral behavior in particular situations from knowledge of a person's stage of moral reasoning.

Conventional-level students (Stages 3 and 4), for example, are more likely to cheat when left undetected than postconventional students, who tend to view honesty in a test situation as a matter of honoring a social contract or maintaining equality with other test-takers. Persons at Stage 6 were more likely to quit Milgram's shock-the-learner experiment than persons at lower stages. In another study, high-stage subjects were more likely to intervene to help a person in distress where such intervention ran the risk of angering the experimenter. Here the subject had to decide whether to aid a person who said he had just had a bad trip on drugs and pleaded for help, or to continue to participate in the experiment as planned. Only 11% of the Stage 2 college students helped the distressed individual; at Stage 3, 27% helped, and at Stage 4, 38%. At Stage 5, the figure rose to 68%, and at Stage 6 fully 100% of the subjects interrupted the experiment to help the person in need.

What kind of environment facilitates movement through the stages and what kind of environment hinders it? Children who grow up in a socially sterile orphanage, Kohlberg reports, are often still at Stages 1 and 2 even in late adolescence. By contrast, children who grow up on the Israeli kibbutz, where intense peer-group interaction, group decision-making, and intermeshing work responsibilities make for a rich social environment, typically reach Stage 4 or 5 in adolescence. Experience makes a difference.

How Do You Educate for Moral Development?

What do the contrasting effects of the orphanage and the kibbutz imply for the school? How can classrooms support development through the moral stages? One way is to structure situations which, like the kibbutz, provide lots of opportunity for role-taking--for experiencing the contrasting viewpoints and feelings of others. Moral development can be considered a process of getting better and better at dealing simultaneously and fairly with a variety of conflicting perspectives on what is right in a particular situation.

You are no doubt familiar with commercially available materials for stimulating group discussion designed to share feelings and clarify values. I don't like to emphasize a prepackaged approach because it tends to compartmentalize moral education as something you do on Thursday afternoon when you get out the DUSO[2] kit. The real moral curriculum is the total life of the classroom, all the human interactions that occur there. Teachers who appreciate that, however, can use some of the published techniques to advantage.

One material that I've used myself to get discussions going with children is a series of sound filmstrips developed for Guidance Associates in consultation with Kohlberg and Bob Selman. The filmstrips bring moral conflict down to the scale of the child's world. Some present real-life scenarios: should Holly climb a tree to rescue a stranded kitten for a little boy, or should she keep her newly made promise to her father not to climb any more trees? Some filmstrips depict fantasy situations; my favorite among these--and the most popular among the kids I've worked with--is about Cheetah, a member of the Cat People.

The Cat People are endowed with special powers, which they use to fight crime. In ordinary life, Cheetah is Sam Wilson. In the filmstrip, Cheetah is shown swearing an oath before the Cat People never to reveal his secret identity--"not to my wife, not to my son, not to anyone. They shall know me only as Sam Wilson--husband, father, schoolteacher, and average human being." This is the most important rule of the Cat People, their leader explains, because if the criminals know who they are, the Cat People will not be effective in fighting crime.

One day Sam tells his 9-year-old son, Marcus, to meet him later that evening at the bank, where Sam says he will withdraw money to buy a new car. Sam arrives before Marcus, and notices a light on in the upstairs bank window. "Hmmm," he says, as the drums begin to roll, "This looks like a job for--Cheetah!" Cheetah captures the crooks, strings them up in a net, and quickly changes back into Sam Wilson. Seconds later, the police arrive on the scene and escort the thieves out the front of the bank.

At this moment young Marcus also arrives to see the criminals being apprehended and notices what appears to be another robber

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[2]Developing Understanding of Self and Others.

escaping out the rear bank window. He moves closer; "Dad, it's you! What were you doing in the bank, Dad? Tell me, are you one of the bank robbers? Tell me, Dad, please tell me!" Sam looks down and says softly, "I can't tell you, son, I just can't tell you." The narrator's voice then comes in: "Will Sam Wilson break the most important rule of the Cat People and reveal his secret identity, or will he remain silent and let his son think that he is a bank robber? What should he do?"

The object is to get the children to discuss <u>why</u> they think Sam should or shouldn't tell--to explain their reasons and listen to the reasons of others. It takes practice to get the knack of asking good probe questions that draw out the children's underlying reasoning and keep the discussion focused on the relevant moral issues.

A normal first response with both kids and adults is to want to slip out of the dilemma--by proposing a solution that avoids the hard decision. "He should just tell Marcus to trust him," is a common way of wiggling off the horns of the Cheetah dilemma. You can take time to explore different solutions of this nature and then bring the children back to the conflict: "Sam tells Marcus to trust him, and Marcus tries very had to do that, but he just can't get it out of his mind, he has bad dreams, and he still wonders, what was his Dad doing in the bank, could he be one of the robbers?" You can point out that juries often convict people on the basis of what witnesses say they saw; how can you expect a young boy to forget the sight of his father hurrying out the back of the bank at the scene of the robbery?

With one third-grade class that turned out to be unanimously in favor of Cheetah's keeping his oath, I role-played Marcus to dramatize what he would be feeling and to get the kids to think about other ways of looking at the problem. "Cheetah promised never to tell," they said. "That's an interesting reason," I said, "tell me, do you think it is ever right to break a promise? Did any of you ever break a promise?" Most admitted to having done so, and we got into a good discussion of the reasons for breaking promises and making them in the first place. We moved to other issues, such as whether Cheetah had a responsibility to keep fighting crime, and after 45 minutes the kids were still going strong.

There are lots of formats other than whole-class discussion that you can use--role playing, team debate, small "buzz groups." One format--called "Take a Stand"--was devised by a 6th grader in collaboration with the school psychologist. Five lines are chalked or taped on the floor and labeled, respectively, "Absolutely right," "Somewhat right," "Undecided," "Somewhat wrong," and "Absolutely wrong." The children are then read a story; for example:

> A boy--a pusher--came up to his friend and said, "Do you want a joint?" He replied, "No way!" and ran to get a policeman. The cop busted the pusher for selling drugs.

At the signal "Move!" the children go and stand on the line that shows what they think about the main character's action--with the understanding that they have to explain why they moved where they did. They are free to change lines, but only if they state their reasons for doing so.

Let me emphasize again, however, that games and contrived discussions are not enough. To foster a consistently high quality of communication, you need to create a positive moral climate in the classroom, an atmosphere of mutual respect and support that pervades the curriculum and the whole human environment. A tall order, you're thinking. How can it be done?

Cooperative Learning

Several teachers I know create a positive moral climate by making cooperative learning a natural part of the day-to-day life of their classroom. At its best, cooperative learning is what Piaget calls cooperation: doing operations together in a way that forces children to decenter from their own viewpoint and accommodate to the viewpoint and actions of their co-workers. Here is how a teacher of a combined 2nd and 3rd-grade, Ann Caren of West Hill Elementary School in Ithaca, New York, describes this kind of learning in her classroom:

> One activity which involved every child in the class at some point was the Fireplace Project. We decided together that we wanted to build a fireplace on the school playground for cooking lunch outside and for doing other activities which need heat (such as maple sugaring and making dyes from natural materials). After deciding on a size for the fireplace, the children collected rocks from a nearby woods. They mixed the cement--recruiting the principal to help with this--cemented the rocks in place, and finished the job with a grate that one group had purchased from a local store.
>
> Some children used the fireplace to dye yarn, while another group began to plan a cook-out lunch for the class. The outdoor lunch involved planning what we would have, figuring out the cost, getting volunteers for jobs, buying and preparing the food, building the fire, and serving and cleaning up.
>
> Cooking is available in my classroom whenever children express the interest, and I have found it an especially good way to involve them in sharing real responsibility.
>
> * * *
>
> A month-long activity, entirely initiated and sustained by the children, was the Dinosaur Project. One boy brought a bag of plastic dinosaurs to school and decided

to set up a scene. Other boys soon contributed their dinosaurs. Questions arose: where did dinosaurs live? After looking this up in books, the children set up one ice-age environment and one woodland and field environment with a large body of water. For materials they used twigs, rocks, grasses, and sand gathered from the school grounds. The children made charts illustrating different ages, and did many dinosaur drawings and paintings. Endless discussions took place about which dinosaurs were the oldest and where the various types lived.

This teacher has also found a class newspaper to be an excellent way to foster cooperative effort and group cohesion. In addition, she recommends stocking the environment with materials--blocks, lincoln logs, lego, animals, plants, clay, scrap materials, and plenty of paper and pencils--that naturally stimulate children to work together on activities that are meaningful to them. Craft activities are especially good; one boy learned how to macrame and taught other children how to do it for three straight days.

John Caren, Ann's husband and a teacher of a 5th and 6th-grade in Henry St. John School, describes a learning activity he carried out which illustrates how the teacher can take the initiative.

> This project involved creative writing and was called "Interesting Faces of Ithaca." Eight children and a teacher set out for downtown Ithaca--equipped with a polaroid camera. Each child took a turn photographing someone on the streets of the city. The pictures varied: some were distant shots of people going about their daily routine; others were close-ups of individuals that the children stopped and asked to pose for them. After taking their pictures, the children returned to school to write about them. The pictures and stories were then laminated and made into a book which was available for all of the class to read.

The Class Meeting

Both of these teachers also rely heavily on class meetings to foster a strong sense of community among their children--perhaps the most important ingredient in a good moral climate. A time is set aside--typically 20 minutes at the end of the morning and again at the end of the afternoon--when children share what they have worked on, plan a project, discuss an experience they have had together or personal experiences from home, or exchange views about how to solve a problem that has arisen. Every teacher I know who has worked at developing this kind of regular communication among his or her children reports marked improvement in the general tone and human relationships in the classroom.

The class meeting also provides the cohesion and the caring that are the basis for dealing with any crisis that may arise. A teacher at a recent conference on moral education told a story about a year when she taught a combined 2nd-and-3rd grade and for the first time made a class meeting an integral part of her day. A strong class spirit developed and behavior problems were far fewer than during the previous year. Then one day, toward the end of the school year, a project that several children had worked on in the back of the classroom was found badly damaged. The teacher stopped the activity of the class and called a meeting. "We have good times together and we have problems together," she said. "Something very serious has happened. We cannot continue our work until we find out who is responsible for what happened and the damage is somehow repaired. This is a chance to show if we really care about each other."

There was awkward silence. Then one student spoke up: "Come on whoever did it, tell-it's okay, we'll forgive you!" A chorus of similar appeals went up from the children. Finally, two boys slowly stood up, looking at their feet.

"Yes, Tommy, do you wish to say something?"

"Bob did it."

The teacher waited.

"I did it, too."

"Would you like to say something else?"

"Yeah. I'm sorry."

The other children leaped to their feet and hugged the two culprits in joyous celebration of the confession. There followed an animated discussion to plan how all could work to restore the damaged project. The teacher of this class said she was certain this crisis could not have been resolved in this way had it not been for the strong sense of community the children had built up through their class meetings all year long.

Respect for Persons

You can also define a good moral climate in terms of respect for persons. Morality really comes down to this--to respect for the dignity, the worth, the individuality, the rights of every person. How do you develop this among children?

One obvious way is to set a good example. This becomes hardest to do in the face of conflict with a child, especially if the student has acted without respect for you as a person. I recently came across two stories, each about an incident in which a student called the teacher an obscene name. In one case, a 2nd-grade boy called his teacher a "son-of-a-bitchin whore." The teacher marched him down to the principal's office and demanded that he be expelled, and he was. It's not

hard to figure out what stage of moral development was thereby reinforced for that child.

In the second incident, reported in Haim Ginott's excellent little book, Teacher and Child, a 5th-grade boy was asked by his teacher why he persisted in talking out of turn. "None of your business, you mother fucker!" was his reply. The teacher answered sternly, "What you have just said makes me so angry that I feel I cannot talk to you." The boy, obviously surprised at not being punished, came up after class and apologized for his behavior.

To punish a child, as Ginott points out, is to arouse resentment and make him uneducable. The essence of discipline is finding effective alternatives to punishment--alternatives which leave the child's dignity intact, teach him how he has violated another's rights, and motivate him to change for the better.

Respecting children's rights and dignity as persons may also mean changing the way you speak to them. When Mark was 4 years old, he began issuing regular commands to his mother and me: "Daddy, read me a story," "Mommy, fix my dinner," get me this, get me that. We sat him down for a moral lecture on the virtues of saying "please," "I would like..." etc.

Then the next day, during the morning hassle of getting him off to nursery school, I said, "Mark, get in the bathroom and brush your teeth and wash your face!" He took two steps, turned around, and said very seriously, "Daddy, I don't like getting orders either." Hoisted by my own petard, I negotiated a bargain: I wouldn't give him orders and he wouldn't give us orders. (You can still state the requirements of the situation: "Mark, it's 8:00 and your teeth are not yet brushed.")

Piaget says that adults, because they use their authority in a unilateral fashion, often retard a child's growth toward understanding the mutuality of moral requirements. But he adds that adults can have enormous positive influence on the child's moral development if they will place themselves on an equal-to-equal footing and stress mutual obligation with regard to at least some rules.

You can do the same thing in the classroom. A spirit of fairness will not only develop the child's understanding of the basis for moral rules, but will also motivate him to follow them. As Glasser points out in his book, Schools Without Failure, children are much more likely to adhere to rules that they accept as fair and that they have at least some say in formulating or revising. Moreover, when a child consents to a rule as fair and agrees to follow it, he is much more likely to accept responsibility for improving his conduct when a rule violation is brought to his attention.

Setting a good example for children may sometimes mean providing very direct, explicit cues in particular situations. Sometimes children simply don't know how to speak or act with respect for each other;

they need the tools, the behavioral skills. A 2nd-grade teacher in Skaneatles, Peggy Manring, recounts what she did when the children in her room lapsed into using violence to express their feelings and to try to get their way.

> We had had a rash of fist fights, pencil jabbings, and kickings. Awareness of these behaviors didn't seem to decrease them; it only increased tattling. A few of the children said they had tried talking things out instead of fighting, but it didn't work...
>
> I brought in a bag of wood scraps from the toy factory. There were cubes, rectangles, wedges, and slivers. I dumped these on the rug within everyone's reach and asked the children to make a model of the classroom as they saw it. As fascinated as I was with their creativity and observations, I tried to concern myself primarily with their cooperation skills when these became a problem.

Here is an excerpt from the dialogue that took place between this teacher and the children.

David:	That is the dumbest chalkboard, Martha. You put it in a stupid place.
Me, to David:	You think Martha should put the block in a different place. Would you like to suggest to her where she might put it?
David:	Yeah, right there, the chalkboard is behind the table.
Me, to Martha:	If you accept David's suggestion, you may move your block. If you like it where you put it, you may leave it right there.
Me, to David:	When you don't use the words "stupid" and "dumb," people like to listen to you. You had an interesting point to make about the chalkboard.

Martha moved the block, smiled at David, and the next time David wanted to say something, he said, "Paul, I <u>suggest</u> you look where the art table is. It's parallel to the teacher's desk." Paul picked up on the "I suggest"; so did Eddy and Alan--all three volatile kids. All 18 children seemed to be stretching to cooperate. Several said, "You know, Mrs. Manring, we've been trying to cooperate for 18 turns" and "It feels pretty good here, even though we're having a little trouble."

After 30 minutes and many compliments from me, the children started to play in groups of 2's, 3's, and one group of 4. They built amazing cities, parks and buildings. I stayed to keep my finger on a few pulses. Some rejection and a few tears, but no one gave up.

The kind of direct intervention this teacher did can teach children the skills they need to enter into the positive social interactions that foster development through the moral stages.

How this can also be done at the secondary level is illustrated by the work of Norm Sprinthall and Lois Erickson at the University of Minnesota. In a high school course on "The Psychology of Counseling," for example, they taught their students counseling techniques and listening skills which the students used with each other to discuss personally meaningful issues in their lives. In another course on "The Psychology of Growth for Women," female students learned interviewing skills and conducted field interviews of girls and women across the life span. They then discussed what their data showed about how women change in what they value and how they view their roles. Students in these courses showed significantly greater advance on Kohlberg's stages than students who did not have these experiences.

So there are ways of doing the job if you want to get it done. The problem with the schools, and society as a whole, is that morality has been on the back burner. If we've got Watergates, we shouldn't be surprised. Education for moral development has to be at least as important in the curriculum as education for the intellect.

Moral education in the schools obviously won't solve all of our social problems. But no one knows how much the schools can do to develop moral maturity, for they have barely begun to try. The first step, of course, is deciding that it is the job of the school to help develop good people who can build a good and decent society. I hope that all of you will leave today with a commitment to bringing us closer to that goal with your children in your classroom.

READINGS IN MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND MORAL EDUCATION

Beck, Clive. Moral education in the schools. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor St. West, Toronto 5, Ontario.

Short useful overview with relevance for all levels.

Beck, C.M., Crittenden, Brian, and Sullivan, E. (Eds.) Moral education: Interdisciplinary approaches. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.

Proceedings of 1968 Ontario Conference on Moral Education. Contains stimulating papers by leading scholars in the field and an exchange of views among the participants on a wide range of issues.

Bolton, Robert. Values clarification for educators. Cazenovia, NY: Ridge Consultants, 4763 Ormande Drive, 1974.

Covers material helpful to participants before they engage in a values clarification workshop. Delves into some theory background not available in other books on values clarification.

Bolton, R. Workbook in values clarification. Cazenovia, NY: Ridge Consultants, 4763 Ormande Drive, 1974.

Outlines basic methods and has worksheets for numerous strategies for values clarification with various age groups.

Brearly, Molly. The teaching of young children: Some applications of Piaget's learning theory. New York: Schocken Books, 1970.

Finest book I know on developing a child-centered curriculum for the preschool and elementary years. Includes a sensitive chapter on the development of morality in children.

Chesler, Mark & Fox, Robert. Role-playing methods in the classroom. Chicago: Science Research Associates (259 East Erie Street, Chicago, Ill., 60611), 1966.

Plenty of practical techniques for using role-playing in the classroom.

Farren, F.J., & Mesmer, A.W. It's your decision. Vestal, NY: Values Perspectives Associates, 1975.

Uses "values analysis" approach to helping students "successfully confront, analyze, and resolve challenging dilemmas, both contemporary and historical." Includes many classroom-tested dilemmas.

First Things: Values. New York: Guidance Associates, 1971.

A series of sound-filmstrips, based on Kohlberg's developmental approach. Presents moral dilemmas appropriate for elementary school children, with guides for discussion.

First Things: Social Reasoning. Guidance Associates, 1974.

Developed with Bob Selman and Lawrence Kohlberg, these filmstrips focus on developing children's interpersonal understanding--of others' viewpoints, feelings and motivation. Lays the foundation for First Things: Values.

Ginott, Haim. Between parent and child. New York: Avon Books, 1969.

Wisest book I know on childrearing. Lots of examples of how to talk with kids and how to handle a wide variety of everyday problems in a way that respects the child's dignity as a person and motivates cooperation.

Ginott, Haim. Teacher and child. New York: MacMillan Co., 1972.

A wonderfully human and practical book--helpful for establishing good communication and moral climate of mutual respect between teacher and child.

Glasser, William. Schools without failure. New York: Harper & Rowe, 1969.

If you want to incorporate a class meeting into your program, this is the book to read.

Gordon, Thomas. Teacher effectiveness training. New York: Peter H. Wyden, 750 3rd Ave., 1974.

Active listening and other methods for establishing good human relations in the classroom.

Hall, Robert and Davis, John. Moral education in theory and practice. Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1975.

Written by a philosopher and an educational psychologist, this is a thoughtful introduction to the area. Favors combination of Kohlberg and humanistic approaches.

Johnson, David and Johnson, Roger. Learning together and alone. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1975.

Written by two social psychologists, this is one of the few books that provides specific suggestions for structuring cooperative learning in the classroom.

Journal of Moral Education. Published by Pemberton, Ltd., 88 Inslington High Street, London N1 8EN ($7.50 for 3 issues a year).

Articles, both theoretical and practical, on moral education here and in England, at all different age levels.

Kirschenbaum, H., & Simon, S. Readings in values clarification. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1973.

Includes essays by Simon, Kirschenbaum, Kohlberg, Rokeach, Rogers, Holt, and others.

Kohlberg, and Turiel, E. Moral development and moral education. Chapter in G. Lesser (Ed.), Psychology and educational practice. Glenview, Ill.: Scott Foresman, 1971.

Overview of different approaches to values education, including the developmental stage approach of Kohlberg. Discusses both research and educational implications. An essential foundation for this area.

Lickona, Thomas. A strategy for teaching values. Pleasantville, New York: Guidance Associates, 1971.

Teacher's guide explaining how to stimulate class discussions of Guidance Associates filmstrip dilemmas. Includes section on how to question children.

Lickona, Thomas. Moral development and behavior: Theory, research, and social issues. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston (383 Madison Avenue), 1976.

An in-depth resource. 20 chapters by well-known authorities in the field present different theoretical approaches to moral development, research findings, and applications to social issues.

Lipman, Matthew & Sharp, Ann. Instructional manual to accompany "Harry Stotlemeier's Discovery." Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, Upper Montclair, N.J., 1975.

Includes exercises for stimulating moral understanding and practice as part of broad-based program to develop children's logical/philosophical thinking, interpersonal awareness, and moral sensitivity. Upper elementary grades.

Phi Delta Kappan. Special issue on Moral Education, June 1975 (Available for $1).

An excellent place to start. Contains articles on the major approaches to moral education, including Kohlberg's and Simon's, and critiques of both.

Piaget, Jean. The moral judgement of the child. Free Press, 1965 (1932).

This early, readable book by the famous Swiss developmentalists is full of examples of how 5-12-year-old children reason about right and wrong, lies, punishment, obedience, what's fair. Read the middle section especially for dialogues with children about moral situations.

Porter, Nancy and Taylor, Nancy. How to assess the moral reasoning of students. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (see above for address), 1972.

Kohlberg has revised his system for scoring an individual's moral stage on the basis of dilemma interviews, but this little book remains a useful introduction to assessing moral reasoning. (A new guide is currently being prepared by Harvard's Center for Moral Education.)

Raths, Louis, Harmin, M., & Simon, S. Values and teaching. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1966.

The basic text on the values clarification approach.

Sprinthall, Norm & Erickson, Lois. Learning psychology by doing psychology: guidance through the curriculum. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1974, 52, 396-405.

Tells how to use a semester course for moral education. Describes psychological and value education conducted with two groups of high school students -- combining practical field experience with class discussion of related value issues. Cites positive research results.

Sullivan, Edmund. Moral learning: findings, issues, and questions. New York: Paulist Press, 1975.

Reports results of Kohlberg-style moral education courses carried out in elementary and secondary Canadian schools by faculty from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Includes many useful examples. Also deals with the role of the student and the community in determining a moral education curriculum.